

GOVERNMENT IS YOUR BUSINESS – AND ONLY YOUR VOTE CAN PROTECT IT

(The following is the second in a series of radio broadcasts by Councillor Nicholas Mavroules, candidate for the office of Mayor of the City of Peabody. It is intended to acquaint you with the issues and problems confronting the Citizens of our City in the 1961 municipal election. The text of the address, delivered on Friday, October 27, 1961, is reprinted below.)



My Fellow Citizens:

On last Tuesday evening, I enjoyed my first opportunity to discuss with you very briefly some of the important matters which confront us as citizens of the City of Peabody.

I say "very briefly" because fifteen minutes is a very short period of time when you consider the many, complex issues and problems which should be discussed in this campaign for the office of Mayor.

As you know, I attempted early in this campaign to make it possible for you to know WHERE I STAND and WHAT I STAND FOR. Before the primary election, I mailed to your home a circular in which I set forth my thinking on the issues and my suggestions for solution. Then, immediately after the primary election, I invited my opponent to meet with me on the same platform in public halls of his choosing, at times and dates to be designated by him, and at my committee's expense.

I did this in order that you might be able to see and hear us, and to enable you to form your own judgment as to which one of us is better qualified to be Mayor of our City.

During the same time, my opponent, our present city councillor, attempted to beguile and fool you with his four-minute circular, complete with time-worn and meaningless slogans, full of vague promises, and devoid of any constructive thinking. He rejected my invitation and offered the excuse that we would both be invited to participate in publicly sponsored forums.

It is interesting to note that to this day we have each been afforded eight minutes in one publicly sponsored meeting.

Additionally, in his paternal rejection of my offer, he expressed a willingness to discuss those matters in which we are in disagreement. It is, as

you know, difficult to disagree with one who has done no thinking and expressed no opinions on the issues. He takes few chances. I wonder, sometimes, what he would do if he were confronted with a vote on the question: Are you for or against sin? It is possible that he would either vote to table the question or vote "PRESENT".

As to his willingness to discuss matters we disagree about, it becomes impossible. Neither you nor I nor anyone else knows what he thinks. Not even his campaign managers, as we shall see. Therefore, the real question is whether my opponent agrees with himself. The real question is whether my opponent and his record agree with the public image his campaign managers are attempting to paint for you.

In all of these circumstances, I frankly confess that I have no recourse in my effort to get you to know where my opponent stands.

I must, therefore, resort to this medium to bring to you some knowledge of my opponent's record and platform, and his virtual lack of both. In truth, I have less than little desire to speak of his voting record and to acquaint you with his failings as a city councillor. I would prefer to set forth my own program, my own thoughts and my own hopes for the future of our City.

The circumstances dictate what I do.

On last Tuesday evening, I contrasted my opponent's glib slogans and meaningless catch-phrases with my own approach to the matters of our municipal planning department and the necessary extension of our municipal sewer system.

At the same time, I recited his voting record on those matters.

It becomes apparent that he is a man of instant indecision.

On the matter of making funds available for an urban renewal study, you will recall that on October 24, 1957, he voted, without hesitation or confusion of mind, "PRESENT". In the record of the same council vote, it appears that his general campaign chairman, my good friend, Anthony Samas, voted "Yes".

You can understand, now, what I mean when I say that his campaign managers are trying to project one public image while his own record shows the opposite.

On December 13, 1956, the council record shows that he voted both "Yes" and "No" on a matter involving the extension of the municipal sewer system.

It should be clear that his newspaper advertisements promising action "without confusion and without dilemma" bear little relationship either to the truth or to his record.

I want to bring you up to date on his record as regards our planning department.

On August 24, 1961, only two months ago, my opponent was confronted with a vote on the confirmation of Harold W. Legro as a member of the planning department. Mr. Legro has served the community for more than thirty years. First, my opponent attempted to delay the recording of his vote; he voted "to table" the question. When the necessity of voting became inevitable, he voted "PRESENT".

Is this the stuff Mayors are made of?

If he had the slightest reservation or question concerning the competence, the character, or the integrity of Mr. Legro, he should have voted "No". If he had no question, then he should have voted forthrightly to confirm.

I should like to pause and to make some comment about the significance of the vote "PRESENT". Since my first radio talk, I have been called by a kindly lady who told me that she could not understand the meaning of the vote "PRESENT". She had always been under the impression that a man, a councillor could only vote either "Yes" or "No".

With all due charity and yet in truth, I must answer as follows:

The vote "PRESENT" is meaningless in result, but it speaks louder than a man can shout. It signifies a willingness, even a desire to be present, but not to participate. It is the effort to shirk and avoid responsibility; it is the effort to say both "YES" and "NO" at the same time and to mean neither; it is the effort to be all things to all people.

Ed — it won't work in the Mayor's office.

Immediately following the vote on Mr. Legro's confirmation, my opponent was confronted with voting on the confirmation of William H. Flynn and Joseph S. Bachorowski as members of the planning department. First, my fellow nominee voted "to table" the matters, to put them off to a later date. Finally, when he was forced to vote, he yielded a modified "YES".

I ask you to note his wishy-washy approach, his pussyfooting, his attempt to avoid responsibility whenever he can. It was August 24, 1961, and election time was near. He wanted the Flynn and Bachorowski support and he wanted the support of those who are unhappy with the planning department. He deserves neither.

It is a matter of common knowledge that he now promises at his house parties and coffee hours in Wards 6 and 7 that he will fire the planning board on the day after election. In view of his voting record, it is a bold and brave approach, and it is Meaney-less — excuse me, I mean meaningless.

I could continue to recite his record of evasion, of efforts "to table" and postpone, of efforts to vote "PRESENT" and to avoid responsibility, until both of us would be sick and tired of hearing it. Perhaps, it's a good idea. I don't want you to think the examples I have mentioned stand alone. He may even ask his campaign managers to allow him to answer.

If he did, you would know whether or not he can produce as his campaign directors advertise in his four-minute circular.

On July 25, 1957, he voted against off-street parking at the corner of Foster and Lowell Streets in Peabody Square. There is an example of his common sense effort to help us all. Thanks to other city councillors the parking area is a reality and the value of the downtown area has been preserved, despite his vote.

On September 27, 1956, my opponent voted against first passage of the second Kiley School bond issue. Less than a month later, when his confusion of mind had passed, he moved and voted for adoption of the same bond issue. It would be interesting to ask him what happened between September 27 and October 23, 1956. And it would be more interesting to hear his explanation. Is this why he finds it more convenient to vote "PRESENT"?

If you should happen to have in your home a copy of his record as published by his managers, I would like to direct your attention to Page 3. They tell you that he gave "active and alert support" . . . aren't those wonderful words of description for the present councillor? . . . active and alert support to the elimination of the piggery nuisance. They do not know that their candidate recently told the residents in Crest View Park that the piggeries could not be eliminated under present conditions.

How is that for fence-straddling?

I have promised to give you another example of the difference between the public image his managers are trying to paint and his own record.

On November 26, 1957, Councillor Brennan, my opponent's campaign manager in Wards 6 and 7, asked the city council to record itself in favor of a lengthy resolution. In effect, it asked the School Committee to give immediate attention to the construction of a new elementary school in West Peabody. It was estimated that some 600 children would be seeking admission to the Kiley School and that it could accommodate only 400.

Councillor Brennan, who beats the drums for my opponent in West Peabody, voted in favor of the resolution. Brennan voted "YES".

I need not tell you how my opponent voted. You already know. Mr. Meaney voted "PRESENT".

Now, who was confused? Councillor Brennan? Or my opponent, Councillor Brennan's candidate? Or are they BOTH trying to confuse US?

The new West Memorial School is complete and occupied, but the plaque in the front hallway will not record my opponent's vote, "PRESENT".

I could go on, but the time is running out.

I am trying to light a candle so that later there will be no need for us to curse the darkness.

I am trying to acquaint you with the record and I shall continue to do so up to the day of election.

Thank you for listening.
Good night.

(Councillor Mavroules' next broadcast over Station WESX will take place on Tuesday evening, October 31, 1961 at 6:15 P.M.)